

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/01/nigeria-blacklisted-by-us-faith-panel/>

A congressionally mandated commission has blacklisted Nigeria as one of the world's worst abusers of religious freedom, in a controversial decision made with dissent from at least one of the panel's members.

The ranking is linked to the government's role in religious discrimination and retribution in the large West African country. Although official policies do not encourage or promote such actions, the commission faults the authorities for failing to prevent violence along religious lines.

"The toleration by Nigeria's federal, state and local governments of systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom has created a climate of impunity, resulting in thousands of deaths," the **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** said in its annual report, to be published Friday.